MARS Council Meeting Notes

General Information	
Date/Time:	Thursday, May 28th, 2009
Location:	13836, SSMC #3

Attendees:

Maureen Pulver – NMFS	Marina Rubina – NMFS/OCIO
Mary Rieck - NWS	Ajith Abraham – NMFS/OCIO
Tonya Coleman - NMFS	Rupa Suchak (for Rahul Dayal) –
Dawn DiFiore– NMFS	NMFS/OCIO
Tarandeep Bawa – NWS/NMFS	Renee Galloway – NOS
Penny Schmiedeberg – NWS	Sylvia Scott – OAR
Derek Hill – NWS	Dinara Holmes – OAR
Lisa Berry – NWS	Cindy Loitsch – OAR
Sue Bracey - NWS	Eugene Burger - OAR
Daniel Bess – Program Support	Gerald Thomas – NMAO
Keith Markva – CIO	James Lewis – NESDIS
Jim LeDuc - CFO	Renee Galloway - NOS

New MARS Project Manager - Tarandeep Bawa, the new MARS Project Manager, was introduced to the Council members.

Meeting Schedule Change - Maureen Pulver proposed meeting monthly instead of every other week. Special circumstances could dictate meeting more frequently than once a month.

Decision/Action Item: The Council approved the new schedule. Maureen will send out a list of new meeting dates.

FY 10 Out-year Planning – Maureen reminded the group that FY 10 out-year planning was now available in the Data Entry module. There have not been any changes to out-year planning since last fiscal year. Detailed instructions are available on the on-line Users Guide under System Administration (page 37).

Status of MARS IT Cost Distribution Report – Penny Schmiedeberg gave a demo of the 1st phase of the IT cost report for LOs that are using the task code methodology to track IT costs. She also showed the group that new objects were added to the task folder in the Adhoc Variance Reporting Universe for LOs using task codes with IT prefixes. For OAR and NWS, she created a new folder: IT Cost Allocation (with current and effective rate for the selected fiscal month).

Decisions/Action Items: The group agreed that BOP columns should be removed from the IT cost report since we don't BOP at the task code level. Penny will create a new layout for customer approval with cost categories as data columns or rows (estimated time of completion for 1st phase report is the first week of June). The Council also agreed that IT cost reports should include the Internal Fund and exclude object class 77XX

obligations in order to properly capture IT costs. After a lengthy discussion on fund transfers, the Council agreed that it will be the responsibility of the office receiving funds to account for IT costs whether they use the task code method or percentage rates. Costs will be reported by organization and not by program.

Completed CCRs #924 and #925 – Penny gave a demo of the MARS Adhoc Budget detail MARS Data Universe (CCR #924) and the MARS Adhoc Credit Card Trans CBS Data Universe (CCR #925).

Grants Data Universe/Reporting (CCR #561) – Jim Lewis would like to see what information is available from the Grants OnLine (GOL) extract to see if we need a universe for that data and additional reports.

Decision/Action Items: The other LOs would also like to see what data is available. Penny will provide a data dictionary of what is currently downloaded from GOL. After review, the LOs will need to define requirements.

Improvements to NOAA Variance Reporting – Penny demonstrated improvements that make selection easier and navigation faster.

Follow Through on CCRs - Mary Rieck reminded the LO Admins that it is their responsibility to respond promptly to the development teams questions and to provide feedback so that CCRs can be closed. There are several CCRs that the developers believe to be complete, however, the requesting LO isn't providing the requested feedback. If a CCR is no longer necessary, the LO who submitted the CCR needs to communicate that to the team.

BOP Upload to CBS Issues – The MARS Data Entry team has been working with the LOs to help them resolve issues with the CBS upload (i.e., fiscal year check for reimbursable funding, unneeded commas in the cvs files, etc.).

Action Items: LOs should continue to submit help desk requests to CBS and also copy Maureen. If the upload issues don't get resolved, we'll raise this to another level.